

REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION OF US 97 PATEROS TO CANADIAN BORDER AS STATE SCENIC BYWAY

BRIEFING PAPER

Prepared for the
JULY 2002 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING

Prepared by

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PURPOSE:

The purpose of this agenda item is to ask that the Commission adopt a resolution designating the US 97 Pateros to Canadian Border corridor as a State Scenic Byway.

ACTION/OUTCOME:

As addressed in RCW 47.39, Washington State scenic byways are designated for the significant scenic, natural, cultural, recreational, historic or archaeological resources that are found along their corridors.

This Commission action will recognize US Route 97 beginning in Pateros commencing north to the Canadian Border, including all of State Route 215, and that portion of State Route 20 that connects US Route 97 and State Route 215, as being an interim state scenic byway. Refer to the attached map.

BACKGROUND:

In early 2002, the Scenic Byway Committee of Highway 97 Border Region Coalition made formal application to Heritage Corridors Program to be assessed for qualification as a state scenic byway or heritage tour route. The resource assessment and public involvement process have been completed.

DISCUSSION:

Staff and byway proponents have accomplished the following tasks:

- < The field review team has completed the data collection portion of the visual quality assessment, the traveler services verification, and the heritage resources evaluation. This is summarized in the draft *Proposal to Designate* document;
- < A draft visual assessment discipline report has been completed for review by the Recommendation Panel; and
- < The US 97 byway organization submitted their final designation application by the June 24, 2002 deadline.

The Recommendation Panel has reviewed the data and has developed the following findings and recommendation:

Findings

- ⟨ The route's visual quality ratings warrant it being designated a state scenic byway, as supported in the *US97 Visual Quality Discipline report*;
- ⟨ The route has an adequate diversity, availability and distribution of traveler services;
- ⟨ The route has a substantial number of heritage resources to support the telling of the byway story;
- ⟨ The route has the potential to be marketed as a tourist destination
- ⟨ Strong local support exists from by community members, elected officials, businesses and agencies, including the Colville Tribe;
- ⟨ A strong grassroots byway organization is leading the designation effort;
- ⟨ The byway organization with broad community support is committed to developing a Corridor Management Plan, and the organization currently has a grant application pending with the National Scenic Byways Program.

The Recommendation Panel has determined that the US 97 route meets the criteria for being designated a state scenic byway.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the Resolution, and direct Heritage Corridors Program staff to work with local byway leaders to draft legislation to amend RCW 47.39 to add this route to the official list of state scenic byways.

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